

# FABLES

WILLINGHAM  
BUCKINGHAM  
LEIALOHA

95

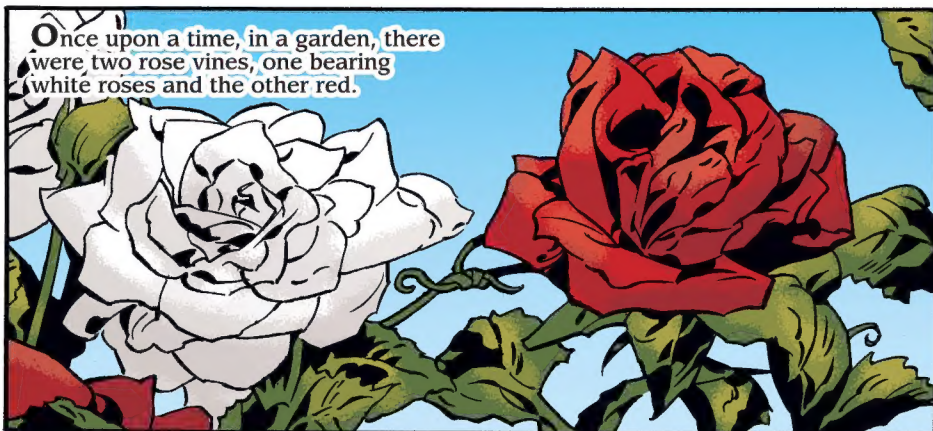


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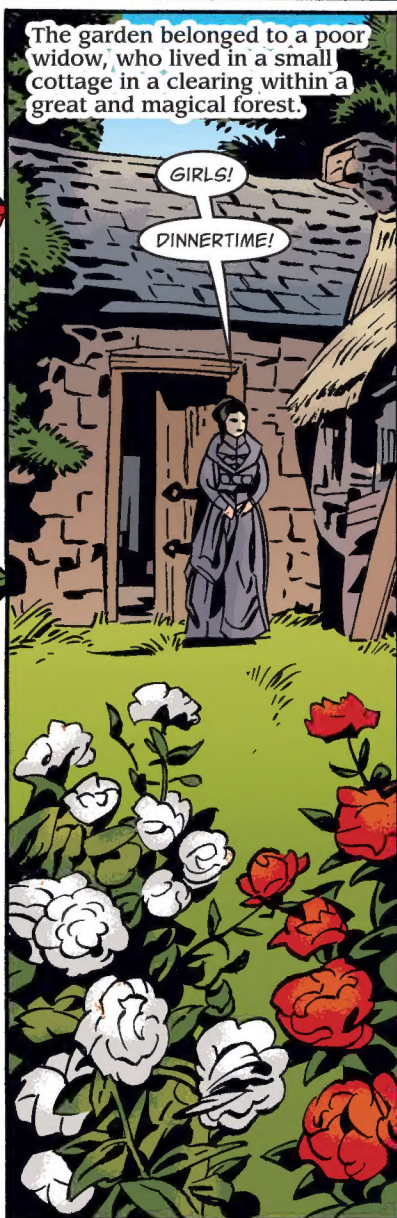
Jul '10

suggested for  
mature readers  
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Once upon a time, in a garden, there were two rose vines, one bearing white roses and the other red.



The garden belonged to a poor widow, who lived in a small cottage in a clearing within a great and magical forest.



GIRLS!

DINNERTIME!

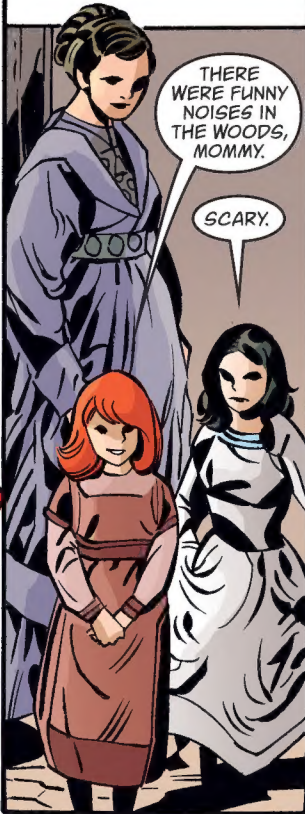
# Snow White & Rose Red

## Chapter Two of Rose Red

She had two daughters, who were just like the two roses.

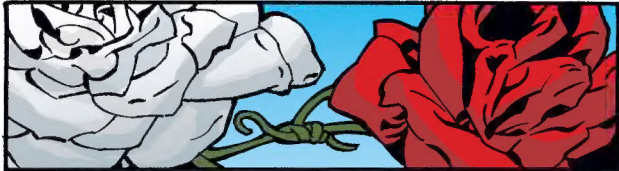


They were as happy as any two children in the world.



THERE WERE FUNNY NOISES IN THE WOODS, MOMMY.

SCARY.

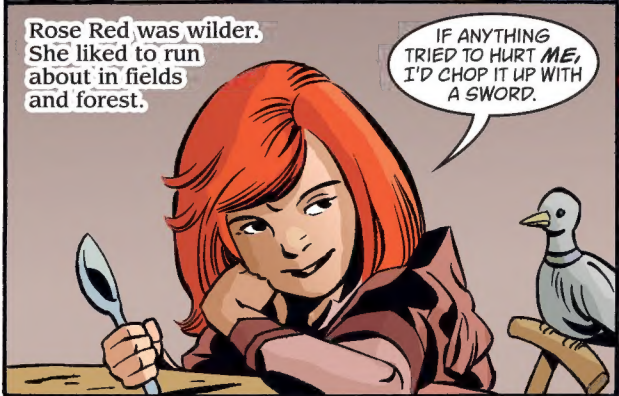


Snow, White, was gentle and quiet.



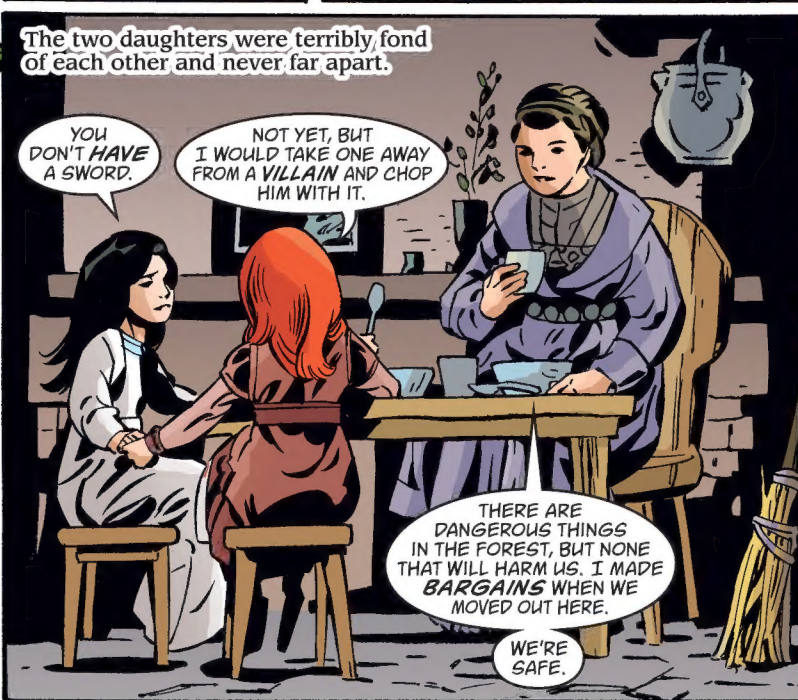
THERE'S NOTHING IN THE WOODS THAT COULD HURT US, IS THERE, MOMMY?

Rose Red was wilder. She liked to run about in fields and forest.



IF ANYTHING TRIED TO HURT ME, I'D CHOP IT UP WITH A SWORD.

The two daughters were terribly fond of each other and never far apart.



YOU *HAVE* A SWORD.

NOT YET, BUT I WOULD TAKE ONE AWAY FROM A VILLAIN AND CHOP HIM WITH IT.

THERE ARE DANGEROUS THINGS IN THE FOREST, BUT NONE THAT WILL HARM US. I MADE *BARGAINS* WHEN WE MOVED OUT HERE.

WE'RE SAFE.





They'd lived in the cottage in the woods for as many years as the two girls could remember.



One winter's evening as they were sitting comfortably together near the fire...

**KNOCK  
KNOCK**

WHO COULD THAT BE KNOCKING ON THE DOOR SO LATE?

I'LL SEE!

I'LL GET IT!



HELLO, I--

YALP!

A BEAR!

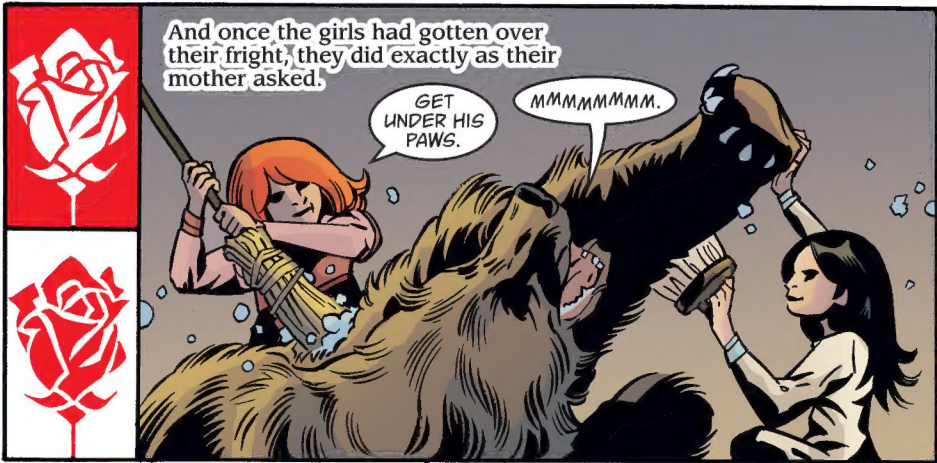
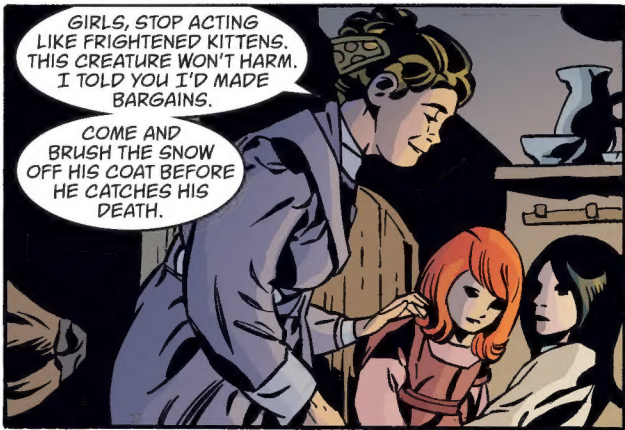


COME TO GOBBLE US UP IN THE NIGHT!

NO, I DIDN'T--I'M NOT--

I ONLY WANT TO--







In the daytime the bear would trot off into the woods to be back about the vital business of bears.



And every night the bear would return again to sleep by their fire.



And that is how the mother and her daughters and the bear passed all the days and nights of the winter.

SNOW WHITE! ROSE RED!  
DON'T BEAT YOUR LOVER DEAD!



THEY'RE STILL *MUCH* TOO YOUNG AND I CAN SEE SOMETHING OF WHAT YOU REALLY ARE, EVEN UNDER YOUR ANIMAL CLOAK.



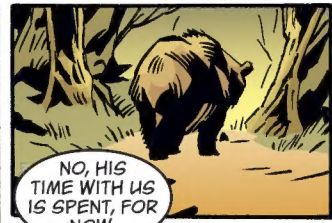
When spring came, tardy after the long winter, the bear left them.



GOODBYE, MOTHER. **GOODBYE** SNOW WHITE AND ROSE RED.

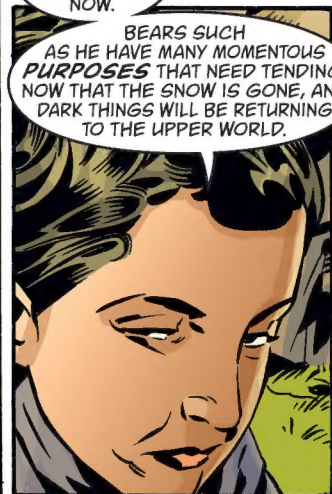
I'LL RETURN AGAIN NEXT YEAR, TO MAKE MY WINTER'S BED!

HE'S NOT COMING BACK TONIGHT, MOMMY?



NO, HIS TIME WITH US IS SPENT, FOR NOW.

BEARS SUCH AS HE HAVE MANY MOMENTOUS **PURPOSES** THAT NEED TENDING, NOW THAT THE SNOW IS GONE, AND DARK THINGS WILL BE RETURNING TO THE UPPER WORLD.



By summertime the girls had nearly forgotten their visitor. Even the recent past is a fragile thing for the young.



WHAT'S THAT?

DO YOU HEAR THAT, SNOW?

LIKE A GREAT **CROW** CAWING?



And of course the enchanted forest yielded other wonders to distract them.



OH MY--

WHAT **STRANGE** CREATURE IS THIS?



WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU, POOR MAN?

CAN'T YOU SEE WITH YOUR OWN TWO EYES, YOU STUPID, INQUISITIVE GOOSE? I WAS CHOPPING AT THIS TREE TO GET WOOD FOR MY TEA KETTLE AND GOT MY MAGNIFICENT BEARD CAUGHT!

I'LL PULL YOU OUT!

SEE IF I DON'T!



OW!  
OW!  
OW!

I AM STUCK FAST, AND ALL YOU'RE DOING IS HURTING ME!

YOU SILLY, SMOOTH-FACED, MILK AND WATER GIRLS!

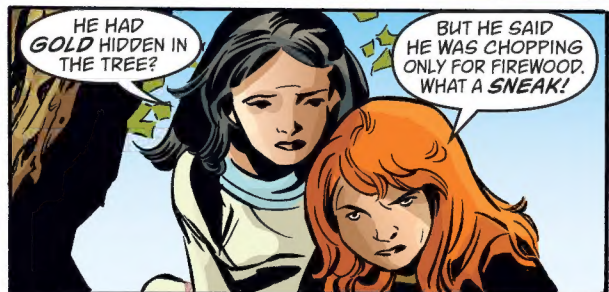
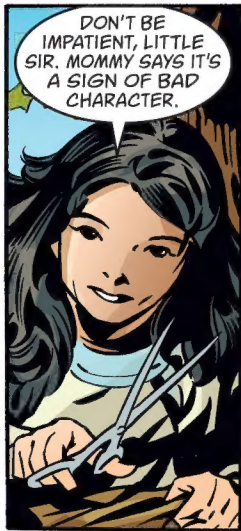


IT'S WEDGED IN TOO FIRMLY.

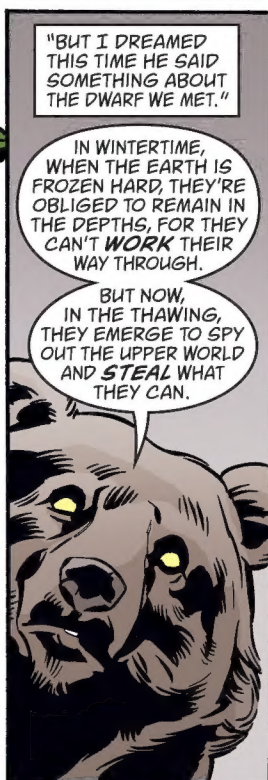


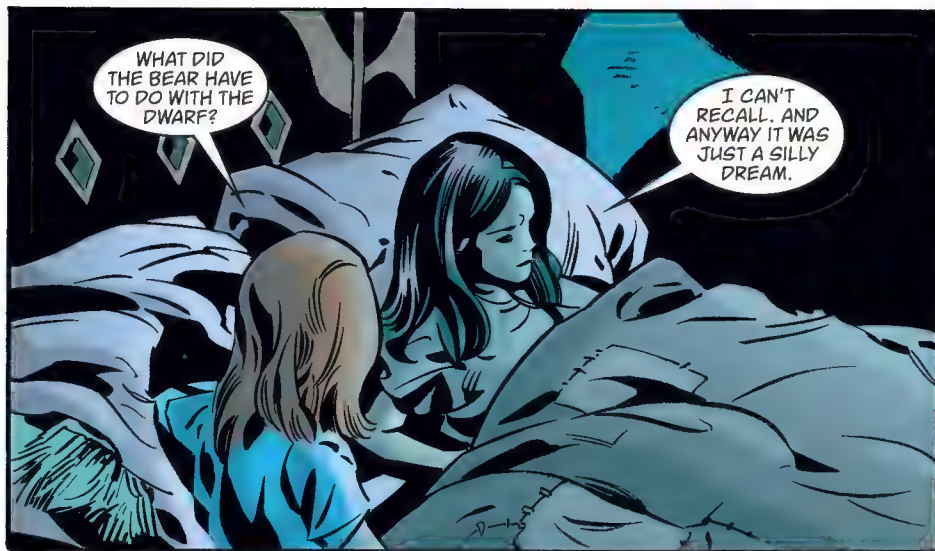
WHAT WRETCHES YOU ARE, CREATURES OF THE UPPER WORLD!





That night...





WHAT DID THE BEAR HAVE TO DO WITH THE DWARF?

I CAN'T RECALL. AND ANYWAY IT WAS JUST A SILLY DREAM.



THE TINY FELLOW WAS SO RUDE AND MEAN. WHATEVER BUSINESS HE MIGHT EVER HAVE WITH OUR FRIEND **CAN'T** BE GOOD.

TRUE. I DO HOPE I NEVER HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH WICKED OLD **DWARFS** AGAIN.



ME TOO! THEY'RE MEAN AND NASTY AND I DON'T LIKE THE WAY HE LOOKED AT US.



IT'S NO NEVERMIND NOW. ALL IN THE PAST. WE'D BEST TRY TO SLEEP AGAIN. GOODNIGHT, ROSE.



NIGHT, SNOW.



SNOW?

MMMM?

WE'LL ALWAYS BE BEST FRIENDS FOREVER AND EVER, RIGHT? WE WILL NEVER **DESERT** EACH OTHER, NOT AS LONG AS WE LIVE?



"NO ONE AND NOTHING CAN EVER SPLIT US APART, I PROMISE."

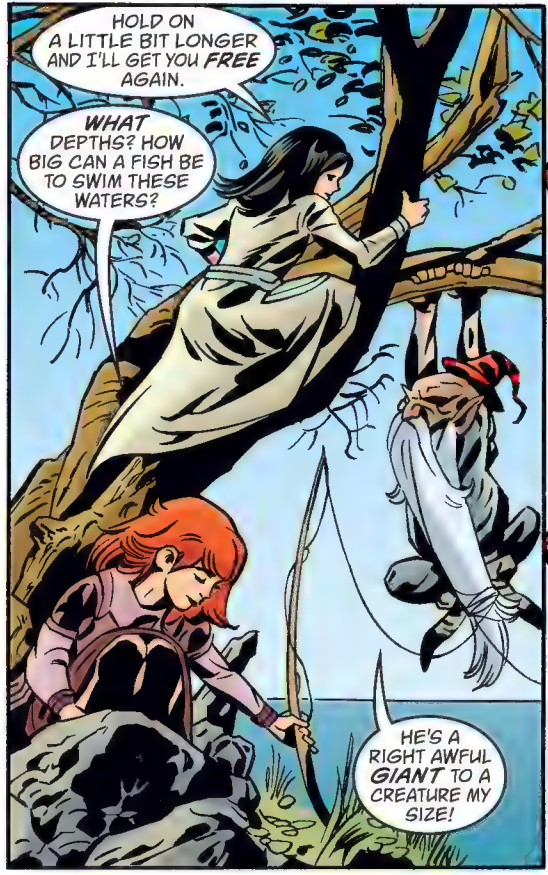
LOOK, SNOW, IT'S THAT FOUL LITTLE MAN AGAIN.

WHAT-EVER IS HE DOING?



WHAT DO YOU THINK I'M DOING, YOU MISERABLE MUSHROOMS? I WAS FISHING IN THE RIVER AND MY BEARD BECAME TANGLED IN THE LINE!

NOW I'LL SURELY BE DRAGGED IN TO BE DROWNED BY THAT GREAT BEAST OF THE DEPTHS!



HOLD ON A LITTLE BIT LONGER AND I'LL GET YOU FREE AGAIN.

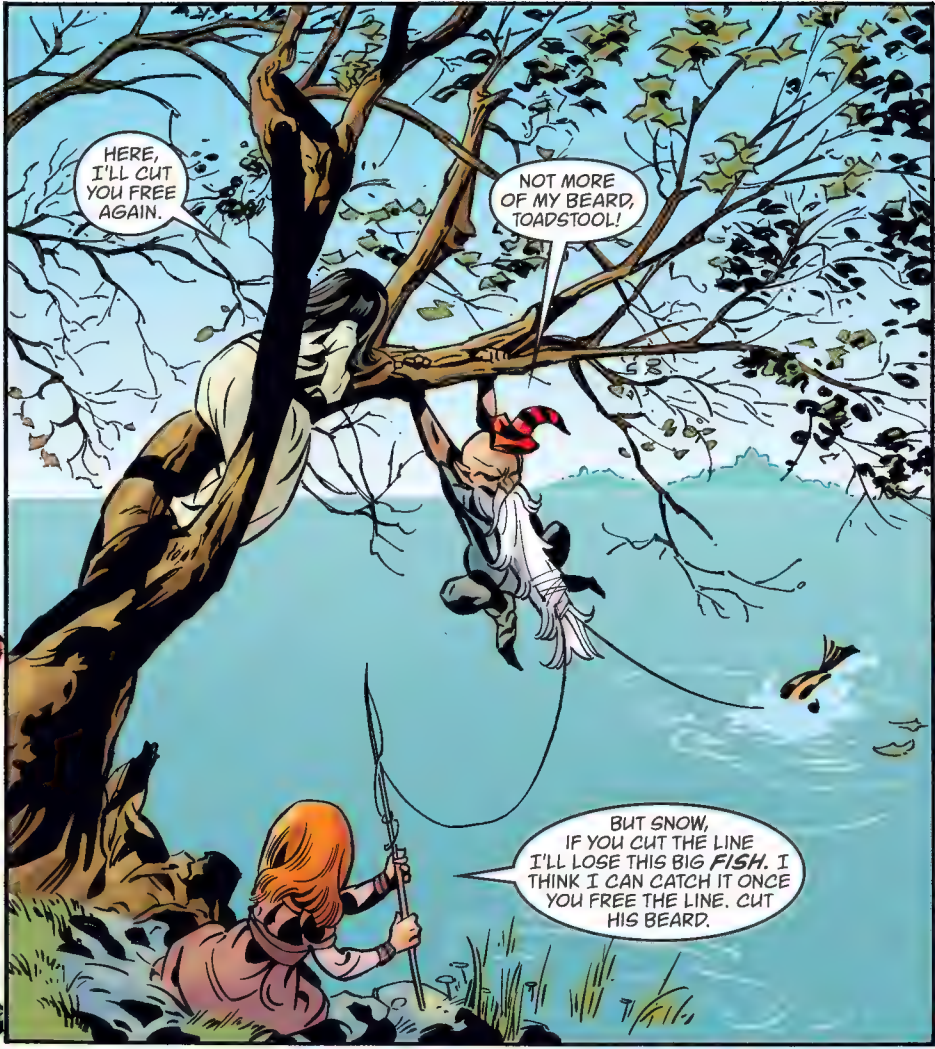
WHAT DEPTHS? HOW BIG CAN A FISH BE TO SWIM THESE WATERS?

HE'S A RIGHT AWFUL GIANT TO A CREATURE MY SIZE!



I NEEDED A FISH FOR MY DINNER, DIDN'T I?

HELP ME QUICK, I'M LOSING MY GRIP!



HERE, I'LL CUT YOU FREE AGAIN.

NOT MORE OF MY BEARD, TOADSTOOL!

BUT SNOW, IF YOU CUT THE LINE I'LL LOSE THIS BIG FISH. I THINK I CAN CATCH IT ONCE YOU FREE THE LINE. CUT HIS BEARD.



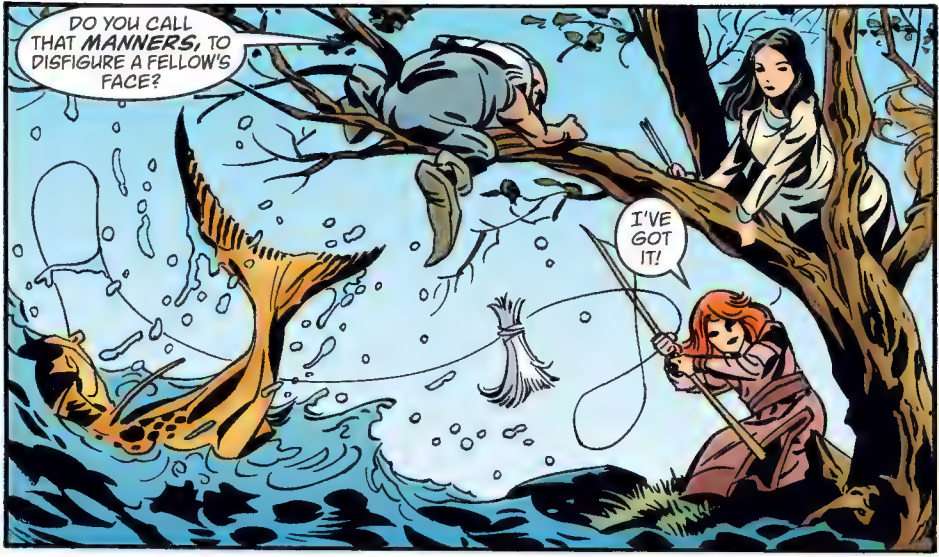
WELL, I CAN'T MAKE BOTH OF YOU HAPPY. WHAT WOULD YOU PREFER, LITTLE SIR. SHALL I CUT MORE BEARD, OR CUT THE LINE?

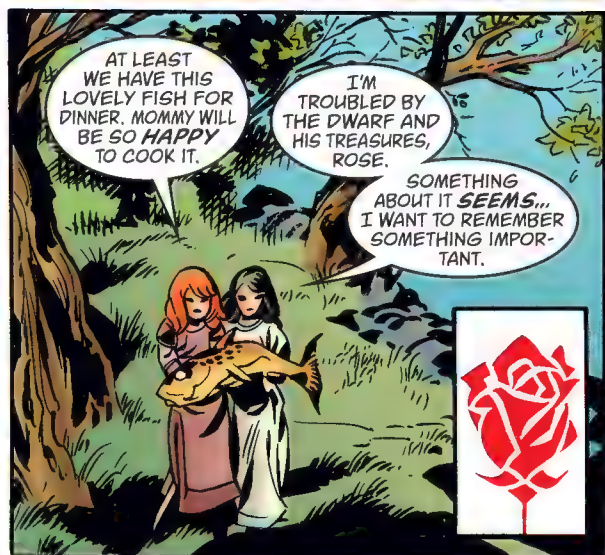
NO, YOU CAN'T CUT THE LINE! I NEED THAT FISH FOR MY DINNER!



SUIT YOURSELF.

SNIP  
SNIP





Snow White and Rose Red encountered the mean little dwarf one last time, near the end of the summer.

HELP!

HELP ME!

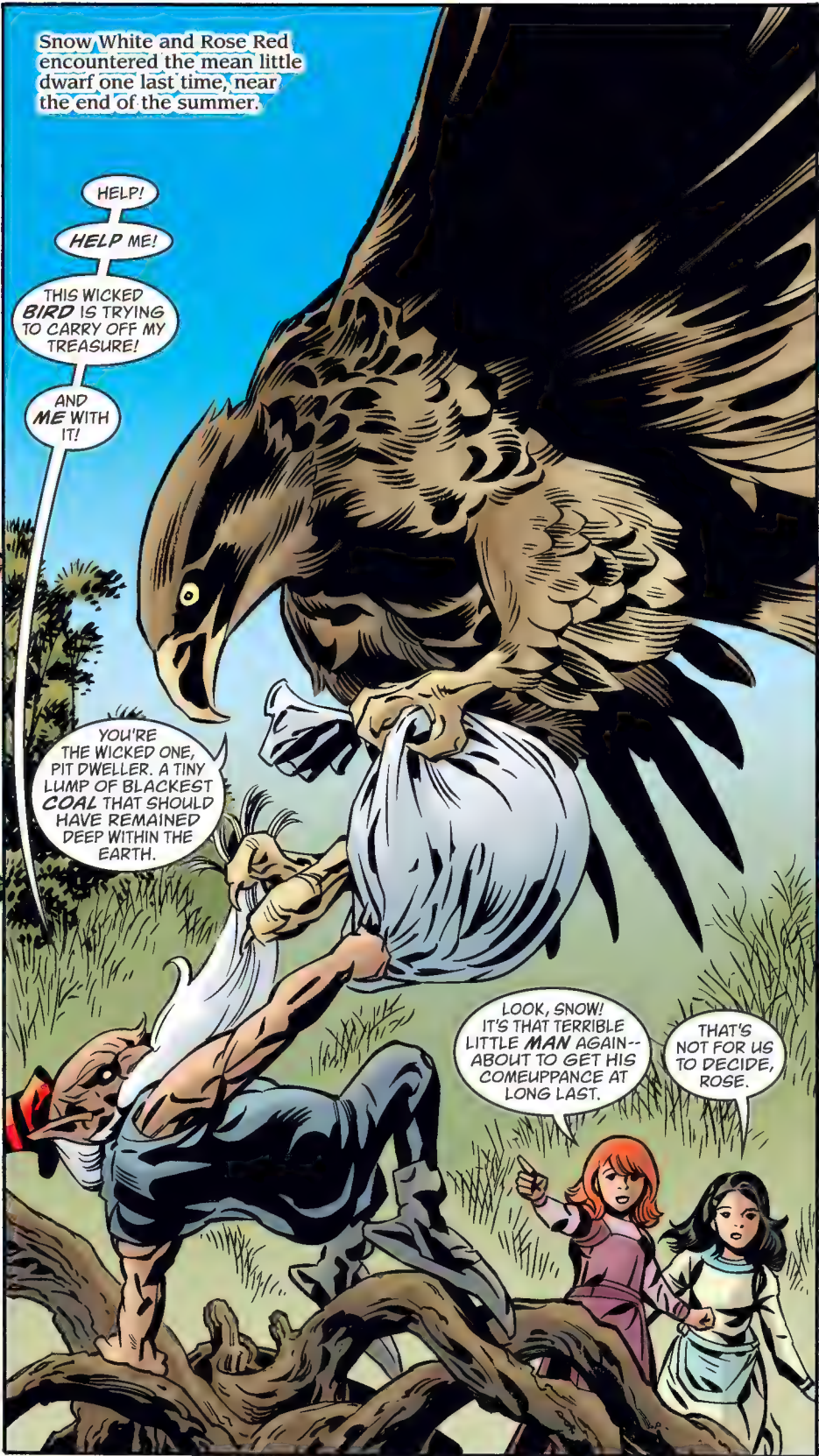
THIS WICKED BIRD IS TRYING TO CARRY OFF MY TREASURE!

AND ME WITH IT!

YOU'RE THE WICKED ONE, PIT DWELLER. A TINY LUMP OF BLACKEST COAL THAT SHOULD HAVE REMAINED DEEP WITHIN THE EARTH.

LOOK, SNOW! IT'S THAT TERRIBLE LITTLE MAN AGAIN-- ABOUT TO GET HIS COMEUPPANCE AT LONG LAST.

THAT'S NOT FOR US TO DECIDE, ROSE.







WE HAVE TO HELP THOSE IN TROUBLE!

NO!

SNIP SNIP



HA! YOU DIDN'T GET AWAY WITH MY TREASURE AFTER ALL!



NOT THIS TIME, COALHEART.

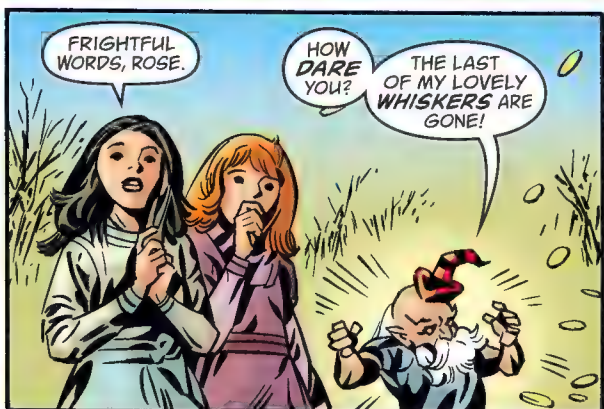
SNOW WHITE AND ROSE RED, YOU'LL REGRET WHAT YOU HAVE DONE.

THE DWARF IS MADE OF MALICE AND DREAD, AS ARE HIS SEVEN SONS.



FOR ONE OF YOU SEVEN EVILS AWAIT. FOR THE OTHER THE LOSS OF ONE DEAR.

SUCH ARE THE WHIMS OF ALL-WEAVING FATE TOWARDS THOSE WHO INTERFERE.



FRIGHTFUL WORDS, ROSE.

HOW DARE YOU?

THE LAST OF MY LOVELY WHISKERS ARE GONE!



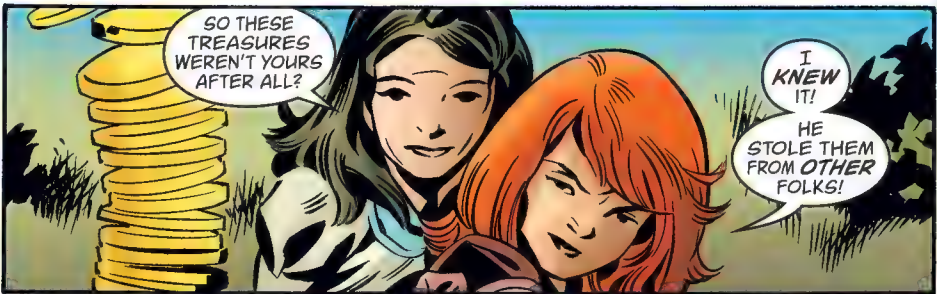
AND MOST OF MY POWER WITH THEM!

HUSH, UGLY FELLOW. SHOW AN OUNCE OF GRATITUDE. YOUR BEARD WILL GROW BACK.



NOT IN TEN TIMES TEN YEARS! AND HOW SHALL I WORK MY SPELLS AND CANTRIPS UNTIL THEN?

HOW WILL I FORGE THE ENCHANTMENTS TO POINT OUT ALL OF THE SECRET PLACES WHERE THE CREATURES OF THE UPPER WORLD HIDE GOLD AND GEMS AND DIVERSE OTHER TREASURES?



SO THESE TREASURES WEREN'T YOURS AFTER ALL?

I KNEW IT! HE STOLE THEM FROM OTHER FOLKS!



NO! THEY'RE MINE!

THEY BELONG TO ME BECAUSE I WAS ABLE TO FERRET OUT THEIR MAGICAL HIDING PLACES AND TAKE THEM FROM THEIR FALSE OWNERS.



AND EVERY COIN AND GEM WAS ONCE DEEP IN THE WORLD WHERE I LIVE. SO DEEP IN THE WORLD THEY SHALL BE AGAIN!

AS IS ONLY RIGHT!

AS IS ONLY FAIR!



BUT NOW, THANKS TO YOU LITTLE **BEARD-KILLERS**, I MUST TAKE WHAT I HAVE SO FAR AND GO BACK HOME, TO WAIT SO MANY, MANY **YEARS** BEFORE I CAN SCOUR THE OVERWORLD FOR MORE.

GOOD RIDDANCE!



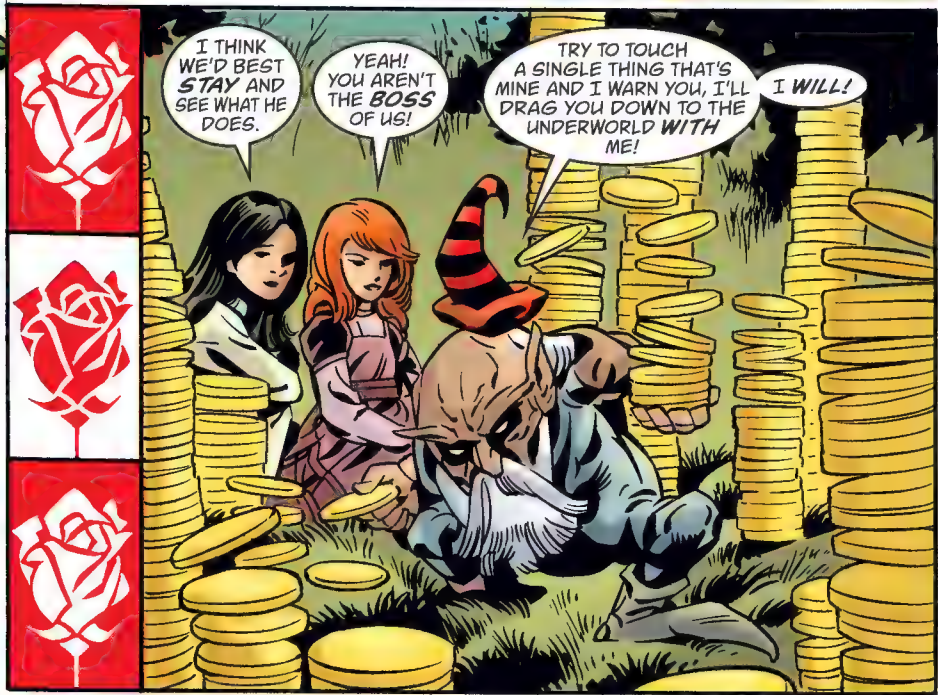
OH, THE TREASURES THAT WILL BE MINED AND REFINED AND GATHERED AND SPENT IN THAT TIME! WOE BETIDE ME, FOR EVERY **COIN** I DON'T YET OWN!

YOU'RE JUST A GREEDY GUS!



GO AWAY FROM ME, DOUGHFACES!

I MUST USE THE LAST ENERGIES REMAINING TO SUMMON ALL THE **RICHES** I'VE FOUND SO FAR, AND THERE'LL BE SCANT LEFT TO OPEN MY STAIRWAY HOME.



I THINK WE'D BEST **STAY** AND SEE WHAT HE DOES.

YEAH! YOU AREN'T THE **BOSS** OF US!

TRY TO TOUCH A SINGLE THING THAT'S MINE AND I WARN YOU, I'LL DRAG YOU DOWN TO THE UNDERWORLD WITH ME!

I WILL!





Once upon a time a magical bear came out of the magical forest and killed a magical dwarf.

AT LAST!

FOR YEARS I FOLLOWED YOU!

AND NOW HERE YOU ARE, POWERLESS AT LAST, AND WITH ALL YOUR STOLEN TREASURES AT HAND!

YYURRK!

OH NO!

WOW!





YOU DID IT!

YOU DESTROYED THE EVIL DWARF'S POWER, AND WITH IT, THE SPELL HE PLACED OVER ME.

ARE YOU GOING TO KILL US NOW, TOO?



NOT AT ALL. YOU SAVED ME, SNOW WHITE, WHEN YOU CUT HIS BEARD AWAY. AND I SHALL REWARD YOU BY MARRYING YOU, AS I PROMISED.

LOOK AND MARVEL! AT LONG LAST I CAN RETURN TO MY TRUE FORM.



I NEVER WAS A BEAR AT ALL, UNTIL HE PLACED HIS EVIL ENCHANTMENT OVER ME.

I'M ACTUALLY THE PRINCE OF A FAR KINGDOM. AND YOU'LL BE MY PRINCESS, JUST AS I PROMISED YOU LONG AGO.

BUT--?



THE FARM,  
UNCOUNTABLE  
YEARS LATER...

THAT'S  
THE DAY  
I LOST HER,  
MOMMY.

WHEN THE  
BEAR TURNED  
INTO PRINCE  
BRANDISH.

BRANDISH  
DESCRY.

THAT  
SWEET-TALKING  
ROGUE.

THE FIRST  
OF HER STRING OF  
HANDSOME PRINCES,  
COME TO TAKE HER AWAY  
FROM COTTAGES  
TO PALACES.

AWAY  
FROM  
ME.

NOT QUITE, MY LITTLE  
RED DUCKLING. THERE'S  
MORE TO THE *STORY*  
I NEVER TOLD  
BEFORE.

SNOW  
DIDN'T ABANDON  
YOU. NOT LIKE YOU  
THOUGHT.

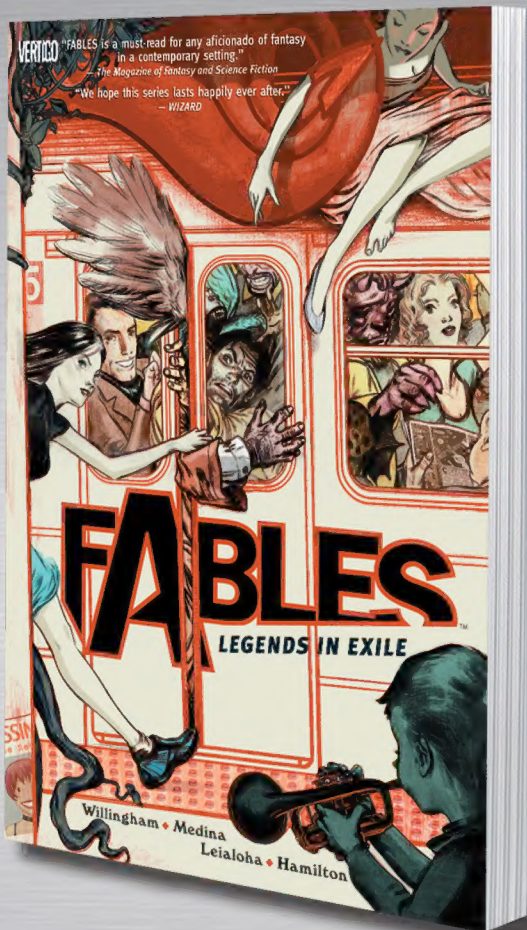
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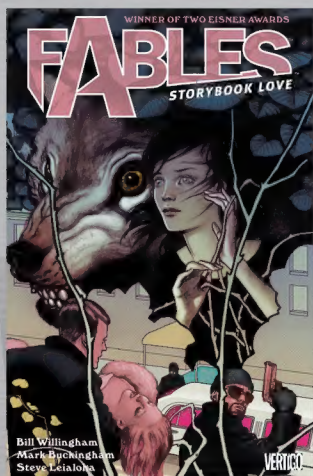
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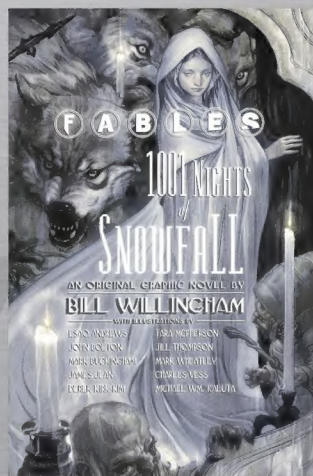
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NATHAN